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EXAMINER

VIG, NARESH

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3629

DATE MAILED: 04/13/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/463,225

Applicant(s)

SCHWARTZ ET AL.

Examiner

Naresh Vig

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☒ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

This is in reference to response received on 07 January 2004 to the office action mailed on 03 October 2003. There are 20 claims, claims 1 – 20 pending for examination.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1 - 20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1 – 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over an article "Toshiba Introduces Home PC Vision Connect For Easy Connection To A TV"

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hereinafter known as Toshiba in view of Kohorn US Patent 5,128,752 further in view of Kara US Patent 6,233,568 and Ryan US Patent 6,081,795

Regarding claims 1, 2, Toshiba teaches convergence of computing and home entertainment. Toshiba allows users to enjoy surf the internet (allows users to communicate with the remote host). Toshiba teaches:

each said customer station comprising a television, a set-top box communicatively coupled with the television, a remote control communicatively coupled with the set-top box.

host and each customer station communicatively coupled (allows user to surf internet);

means responsive to information provided by a customer at one of said customer locations via the remote control for ordering enhanced television services at the television (remote controller with set-top box);

Toshiba does not teach printer communicatively coupled with the set-top box, said printer disposed to print labels. However, Kohorn teaches tokens and coupons generated in a television viewer's home by the viewer entering selected product information (user places order) and authentication data transmitted to and displayed on the television (remote host transmits the information for user's order) into a home generating unit [abstract]. Each generating unit comprises printer unit [col. 4, line 50]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the

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invention was made to modify Toshiba as taught by Kohorn to add printing capability to Toshiba.

Toshiba in view of Kohorn does teach means responsive to information provided by the customer at the remote control at one of said customer stations for sending to the host a first message requesting [col. 2, lines 1 – 6]. Toshiba in view of Kohorn does not teach postal indicium and identifying the customer station associated therewith, means responsive to the first message for presenting to the postal security device a request for the postal indicium; However, Kara teaches dispensing postage or other authorization information electronically by using a portable processor containing a maximum amount of preauthorized postage which can be applied to any piece of mail or other item [abstract]. Postage can be printed by the first PC (set-top box) on an envelope, label or letter through a printer or special purpose label maker coupled to the first PC (device used by the user) [Fig. 1A, 8]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn as taught by Kara to allow users to order postal indicia from postal authority using the system they are using.

Kohorn does not teach responsive to the generation by the postal security device of a second message indicative of the postal indicium for transmitting information indicative of the postal indicium to the set-top box; and means responsive to said information indicative of the postal indicium for causing said printer to print said postal indicium on a label. However, Kohorn teaches authentication data (second message) transmitted to and displayed on the television into a home generating unit [abstract].

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Each generating unit comprises printer unit (to print content received from remote computer) [col. 4, line 50]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba as taught by Kohorn to add printing capability to Toshiba and print information received from a remote computer on a local printer.

Toshiba in view of Kohorn does not teach accounting means within host storing information indicative of postage value printed at each of said customer stations; and means responsive to the message identifying the customer station for modifying the stored information associated with the customer station within said accounting means. However, Kara teaches that accounting means [claim 9]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba as taught by Kara to have accounting means to make records of postage dispensed to properly bill or charge the customer.

Toshiba in view of Kohorn and Kara does not teach nonvolatile memory. However, Ryan teaches non-volatile memory used in postage metering system [Fig. 3]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn and Kara as taught by Ryan and use nonvolatile memory to prevent loss of data from power outage.

Regarding claim 5, Toshiba teaches host system remotely located from the customer station (customer uses Toshiba to surf internet).

Regarding claim 6, Toshiba in view of Kohorn does not teach menu interface for communicating with the users. However, Kara teaches menu interface for communicating with the users [Fig. 4a – 4n]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn as taught by Kara and use menu interface for communicating with the user to make the system more user friendly.

Regarding claim 7, Toshiba in view of Kohorn does not teach identification data includes a destination address and a zip code. Official notice it taken that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that when a person wants to mail a package, mail piece includes destination address and zip code when the mail piece is to be mailed in USA. Kara teaches that information about the transaction, such as the debit or credit amount and/or other transaction information that is postage or shipping related, such as the addressee's ZIP code, the addressor's ZIP code, the recipient's address and name, the mail class, etc., are uploaded to the device from the PC [col. 4, lines 38 – 43]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn as taught by Kara to be able to change the address to print shipping label for user.

Regarding claim 8, Toshiba in view of Kohorn does not teach human readable identifier information related to the mailpiece is printed on the label in addition to the indicia. Kara teaches human readable information related to the mail piece printed on the label [Fig. 9]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn as taught by Kara to print shipping label for the user.

Regarding claim 9, Toshiba in view of Kohorn does not teach a weighing scale communicatively coupled to the set-top box, the weighing scale being adapted to determine a mass of a mail piece needing the indicia and communicate the mass information to the host for determining an amount of postage to be included in the indicia. However, Kara teaches a weighing scale communicatively coupled to a computer system (set-top box) [Fig. 1A] to provide automated input of the weight of a postal item.

Regarding claim 10, Toshiba in view of Kohorn and Kara does not teach postal security devices in the host are shared among the customers. However, Ryan teaches postal security devices shared among the customers [col. 4, lines 3 – 6]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was

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made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn and Kara as taught by Ryan and Kara to extend open system networking scheme (PC Meters) to closed systems or traditional systems.

Regarding claim 11, Toshiba in view of Kohorn does not teach operator of the host maintains a set of accounts with respect to each customer, the accounts including accounting information for each customer. However, Kara teaches that the processor device stores an amount of credit from which the debit amount is deducted [Fig. 7, col. 4, lines 55 – 67]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba as taught by Kara to have accounting means to make records of postage dispensed to properly bill or charge the customer.

Regarding claim 13, Toshiba in view of Kohorn does not teach host communicatively linked to a plurality of delivery service providers, and the host is further adapted to retrieve and transmit price comparison information to the television display related to the request for postal indicia. However, Kara teaches Host communicatively linked to a plurality of delivery service providers, and further adapted to retrieve and transmit price comparison information to the display related to the request for postal indicia [claim 1, Fig. 8A]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill

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in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kara as taught by Kara to help user select the shipping carrier.

Regarding claim 14, Toshiba in view of Kohorn and Kara does not teach postal security device (PSD) associated with each of the plurality of delivery service providers. However, Ryan teaches that PSD includes unique identification the ability to store postal value and generate digital signatures. Official notice it taken that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that Kara has PSD associated with each of the plurality of delivery service providers to be able to communicate their rates to the user. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba as taught by Kohorn, Kara and Ryan to be able to securely communicate with the service providers for extracting the data to be presented to the user.

Regarding claim 15, Toshiba teaches set-top box comprises an Internet communication device adapted to transmit and receive information between the customer station and the host over the Internet (users can surf the internet)

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Regarding claim 16, Toshiba in view of Kohorn does not teach host further comprises a connection to a plurality of delivery service providers and the host serves as a single point of contact between the customer station and each delivery service provider. However, Kara teaches host to be able to display comparison rates to the user from plurality of delivery service providers [Fig. 8]. Official notice it taken that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that Kara has means and method to get the information from plurality of delivery service providers. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn as taught by Kara to automate the pricing updating process.

Regarding claim 17, Toshiba teaches set-top box comprises a web television interface.

Regarding claim 18, Ryan teaches printing postal indicia at a location remote from a postal security device comprising:

accessing a host data center from a remote location via a communication link [Fig. 1], wherein the host data center includes at least one the postal security device (PSD).

entering a request for a postal indicia [Fig. 5]; and

receiving the requested postal indicia from the host data center and printing the indicia on a label via a printer [Fig. 5].

Ryan does not teach PSD adapted to produce cryptographically secure postal indicia, wherein the step of accessing comprises calling up a submenu on a viewing unit at the remote location and inputting identifier information responsive to queries on the submenu. However, Kara teaches cryptographically secure postal indicia [col. 6, lines 27 – 33]; calling up a submenu on a viewing unit at the remote location and inputting identifier information responsive to queries on the submenu [Fig. 4a – 4n]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Ryan as taught by Kara to ensure that the indicia on the mail pieces are authentic, and, use the menu system to make the system user friendly.

Regarding claim 19, Ryan does not teach host data center is communicatively coupled to a plurality of delivery service providers and the step of entering a request further comprises the steps of entering a request for a comparison of delivery rates for an item, wherein the host data center is adapted to solicit quotes from each delivery service provider and provide the quotes to the user. However, Kara teaches to provide comparison of delivery rates from plurality of service providers and provides quotes to the user [Fig. 8]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Ryan as taught by Kara to help user select the delivery service provider.

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Ryan in view of Kara does not teach host communicatively coupled to plurality of delivery service providers. However, Kara teaches host to be able to display comparison rates to the user from plurality of delivery service providers [Fig. 8]. Official notice it taken that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that Kara has means and method to get the information from plurality of delivery service providers. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn as taught by Kara to automate the pricing updating process.

Regarding claim 20, Toshiba teaches convergence of computing and home entertainment. Toshiba allows users to enjoy surf the internet (allows users to communicate with the remote host). Toshiba teaches:

each said customer station comprising a television, a set-top box communicatively coupled with the television, a remote control communicatively coupled with the set-top box.

host and each customer station communicatively coupled (allows user to surf internet);

means responsive to information provided by a customer at one of said customer locations via the remote control for ordering enhanced television services at the television (remote controller with set-top box);

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Toshiba does not teach printer communicatively coupled with the set-top box, said printer disposed to print labels. However, Kohorn teaches tokens and coupons generated in a television viewer's home by the viewer entering selected product information (user places order) and authentication data transmitted to and displayed on the television (remote host transmits the information for user's order) into a home generating unit [abstract]. Each generating unit comprises printer unit [col. 4, line 50]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba as taught by Kohorn to add printing capability to Toshiba.

Toshiba in view of Kohorn does not teach Postal Security Device (PSD) adapted to generate postal indicia and adapted to be shared among customer sites; However, Ryan teaches PSD to generate postal indicia and shared among customer sites. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn and Kara as taught by Ryan and Kara to extend open system networking scheme (PC Meters) to closed systems or traditional systems.

Toshiba teaches remote data entry unit at the customer site (customers can surf the internet). Toshiba in view of Kohorn and Ryan does not teach data entry unit adapted to allow a user to enter a request for postal indicia into the communications interface by activating a pop-up menu and selecting a function indicated on the menu, the function including transmitting a user identifier together with a communications interface identifier to the host data center. However, Ryan teaches data entry unit

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adapted to allow a user to enter a request for postal indicia into the communications interface by activating a pop-up menu and selecting a function indicated on the menu, the function including transmitting a user identifier together with a communications interface identifier to the host data center [Fig. 7, 8]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn and Ryan as taught by Kara to provide menu interface for user friendly interface, and, authentication for securing the system.

Toshiba in view of Kohorn does not teach a printing device at the customer site adapted to allow the received indicia to be printed. However, Ryan teaches printing device at customer site to receive and print indicia. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn as taught by Ryan to use the printer at customer site to print postal indicia.

Toshiba in view of Kohorn, and Ryan does not teach an accounting device in the host data center adapted to account for postal indicia sent to each of the customer sites when a single postal security device is shared among a plurality of customer sites. However, Ryan teaches PSD shared among plurality of customer sites. Kara teaches accounting means [claim 9]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba as taught by Kara to have accounting means to make records of postage dispensed to properly bill or charge the customer.

Claims 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over an article "Toshiba Introduces Home PC Vision Connect For Easy Connection To A TV" hereinafter known as Toshiba in view of Kohorn US Patent 5,128,752 further in view of Kara US Patent 6,233,568, Ryan US Patent 6,081,795 and Merjanian US Patent 5,920,642.

Regarding claim 12, Kara in view of Kohorn, Kara and Ryan does not teach set-top box include a fingerprint reader adapted to authenticate the user to the host. However, Merjanian teaches a method for commerce through a set-top box in which fingerprint data is employed. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn, Kara and Ryan as taught by Merjanian and use fingerprint reader for authentication to further protect the device from unauthorized use due to the stolen identification password / code.

Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over an article "Toshiba Introduces Home PC Vision Connect For Easy Connection To A TV" hereinafter known as Toshiba in view of Kohorn US Patent 5,128,752 further in view of

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Canon Multipass User's Manual hereinafter known as Canon, Kara US Patent 6,233,568 and Ryan US Patent 6,081,795

Regarding claims 3 and 4, Toshiba teaches:

each customer station comprising a television, a set-top box communicatively coupled with the television, a remote control communicatively coupled with the set-top box.

host and each customer station communicatively coupled (allows user to surf internet);

means responsive to information provided by a customer at one of said customer locations via the remote control for ordering enhanced television services at the television (remote controller with set-top box);

Toshiba does not teach printer communicatively coupled with the set-top box, said printer disposed to print labels. However, Kohorn teaches tokens and coupons generated in a television viewer's home by the viewer entering selected product information (user places order) and authentication data transmitted to and displayed on the television (remote host transmits the information for user's order) into a home generating unit [abstract]. Each generating unit comprises printer unit [col. 4, line 50]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba as taught by Kohorn to add printing capability to Toshiba.

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Toshiba in view of Kohorn does teach customer station comprising a fax machine and a printer communicatively coupled with the fax machine, said printer disposed to print labels; said fax machine communicatively coupled with the public switched telephone network. However, Canon teaches that a printer (Multipass) can be communicatively coupled to customer station. Multipass comprises a fax machine, printer, scanner and copier. Customer can use Multipass to print on plurality of print medium, Canon printer can be communicatively coupled with the public switched telephone network [page 1-4, 1-5]. Can teaches that Multipass can be connected to external devices [page 1-5]. Multipass is responsive to incoming fax telephone calls for receiving and printing fax messages [chapter 5]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn as taught by Canon to use the customers existing infrastructure and save cost to customer getting additional communication lines.

Toshiba discloses means responsive to information provided by the customer at one of said customer stations for sending to the host a first message identifying the customer station associated therewith (customer can surf the internet, IP address is user to identify the workstations over the internet). Toshiba in view of Kohorn and Canon does not disclose requesting a postal indicium. However, Kara teaches dispensing postage or other authorization information electronically by using a portable processor [abstract]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn and

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Canon to use the customer existing infrastructure to order print material from a remote site.

Toshiba in view of Kohorn, Canon and Kara does not teach postal security device (PSD). However, Ryan teaches that PSD includes unique identification the ability to store postal value and generate digital signatures. Official notice it taken that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that Kara has PSD associated with each of the plurality of delivery service providers to be able to communicate their rates to the user. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba as taught by Kohorn, Canon, Kara and Ryan to be able to securely communicate with the service providers for extracting the data to be presented to the user.

Toshiba does not teach responsive to information causing said to print postal indicium on a label. However, Kohorn teaches responsive to information causing the printer to print transmitted information on a label. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba as taught by Kohorn to print the information at a remote location.

Toshiba in view of Kohorn and Canon does not teach accounting means within host storing information indicative of postage value printed at each of said customer stations; and means responsive to the message identifying the customer station for modifying the stored information associated with the customer station within said accounting means. However, Kara teaches that accounting means [claim 9], update account information [Fig. 5B], cryptographically secure postal indicia [col. 6, lines 27 –

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33]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba as taught by Kara to have accounting means to make records of postage dispensed to properly bill or charge the customer.

Toshiba in view of Kohorn, Canon and Kara does not teach nonvolatile memory. However, Ryan teaches non-volatile memory used in postage metering system [Fig. 3]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Toshiba in view of Kohorn and Kara as taught by Ryan and use nonvolatile memory to prevent loss of data from power outage.

Conclusion

Applicant is required under 37 CFR '1.111 (c) to consider the references fully when responding to this office action.

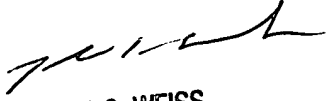
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Naresh Vig whose telephone number is 703.305.3372. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30 - 5:00 (Alt Friday off).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on 703.308.2702. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Naresh Vig
March 31, 2004



JOHN G. WEISS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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